



Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs

For Immediate Release
May 16, 2008

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Remains of Kentucky Soldier Missing from the Korean War Identified

*Sergeant First Class Jack O. Tye of Loyall, Kentucky
to be Buried Monday in Arlington National Cemetery*

(FRANKFORT, May 16, 2008) – A Loyall, Kentucky, man is one of two U.S. servicemen, missing from the Korean War, whose remains have been identified and are being returned to their families for burial with full military honors.

They are Sgt. 1st Class Jack O. Tye of Loyall, Ky., and Sgt. 1st Class George W. Koon of Leesville, S.C.; both U.S. Army. Koon will be buried tomorrow in Leesville, and Tye will be buried Monday in Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C.

“We are glad to have Sergeant Tye home at last,” said Les Beavers, Commissioner of the Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs. “His family has our deepest condolences.”

Representatives from the Army met with the soldiers' next-of-kin to explain the recovery and identification process, and to coordinate interment with military honors on behalf of the Secretary of the Army.

In late November 1950, Koon was assigned to the Medical Company, 9th Infantry Regiment, and Tye was assigned to Company L, 38th Infantry Regiment. Both were members of the 2nd Infantry Division advancing north of Kunu-ri, North Korea. On Nov. 25, the Chinese Army counterattacked the Americans in what would become known as the Battle of the Chong Chon (River). This combat was some of the fiercest of the war, and the 2nd Division initiated a fighting withdrawal to the south. Koon and Tye were captured by Chinese forces during the intense enemy fire, and subsequently died while in captivity from malnutrition and medical neglect.

In 2002, two joint U.S./Democratic People's Republic of Korea teams, led by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC), investigated and excavated a mass burial site located 20 miles northwest of Kunu-ri, along the route taken by captured U.S. POWs being moved to permanent POW camps along the Yalu River. The teams recovered remains at the site believed to be those of several U.S. servicemen, including Koon and Tye.

Among other forensic identification tools and circumstantial evidence, scientists from the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory and JPAC also used mitochondrial DNA and dental comparisons in both Koon's and Tye's identification.

KDVA works with the U.S. Department of Defense to find family members of Kentuckians missing in the Korean War in an effort to obtain DNA samples that will be very helpful in identifying remains as they are found and returned to the US. For more information, go to <http://veterans.ky.gov/programs/koreandna.htm>.